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ABSTRACT

A product of the Effective Use of Resources Project (EURP), which was co-sponsored by the Illinois State Library and the Illinois Board of Education, this manual describes a 7-step process for the development of community-based cooperative planning between school and public libraries. The objectives of school/public library cooperative planning are outlined, and the seven steps in the planning process are individually described: (1) system planning; (2) identification of target areas for participation; (3) identification of local planning team members; (4) the orientation of planning team members; (5) local team planning; (6) the presentation of a team training/planning seminar (which includes training for improvement efforts, a problem solving/planning model, and the development of resource awareness); and (7) implementation of plans and follow-up. A flowchart of the school/public library planning process accompanies the text. (JL)

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School/Public Library Cooperation:

A Community Planning Process for Illinois

Training Manual

A Cooperative Project of

Illinois Secretary of State
Jim Edgar
Secretary of State
and State Librarian

Illinois State Board of Education
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Foreword

The Effective Use of Resources Project (EURP) was a pilot project initiated prior to the 1981-82 school year to develop cooperative planning between school libraries and public libraries. The pilot project has produced a training process which could be used in any community in Illinois. The model assumes that the school district and/or public library have used some prior systematic needs identification process. Although originally targeted for the school and public library population, the model can be used for any team planning purpose.

EURP was initiated by the Illinois Library and Information Network (ILLINET), representing the library sector, and the Illinois Resource and Dissemination Network (IRDN), representing the education sector. Four Illinois communities whose libraries were affiliated with the Rolling Prairie Library System participated in the pilot project.

The project's goals were:

- **To generate interagency planning toward improving programs at the local level.**
- **To encourage communities to utilize public and school library personnel in planning for effective use of resources.**

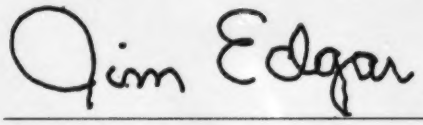
Based on the belief that local school districts and public libraries are important factors in community improvement, this project brought together local citizens to participate in a team planning process. A primary component of the project was a three-day training seminar during which a five-member team comprised of a school principal, a school librarian, a classroom teacher, a public librarian, and a public library trustee developed skills and worked toward a mutually planned objective. Four communities participated in the pilot project.

The EURP demonstrated interagency cooperation at two levels—between the two state agencies sponsoring the project and between public and school libraries at the local community level. Such community cooperative planning increases program effectiveness by concentrating resources in a systematic manner.

The Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois State Library will provide technical assistance to school districts, libraries, and communities in planning school/public library cooperation. To request assistance or share experiences, please contact Preston Levi, Illinois State Library, Centennial Building, Springfield, Illinois 62756, 217/785-0318 or Dr. Lawrence K. Werner, Illinois State Board of Education, 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777, 217/782-0762.

This model is presented in two publications. The Training Manual describes the purpose, key responsibilities, and activities of the step-by-step process for planning effective use of resources. A Resource Supplement includes materials for use in the various steps and content and experiential learning activities in communications, group dynamics, change principles, problem solving/planning, and resource awareness. The two booklets are cross-referenced.

The pilot project and this publication are based on cooperation. The Secretary of State, Illinois State Library, Library Development Group; the Illinois State Board of Education, Department of Local Educational Agency Services, Illinois Resource and Dissemination Network; the Rolling Prairie Library System; and the Illinois communities of Assumption, Mt. Pulaski, Neoga, and Sullivan developed this training process. We acknowledge this effort and encourage others to explore cooperative relationships.



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Secretary of State
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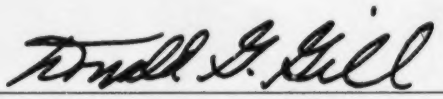

Donald G. Gill
State Superintendent of Education

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Introduction

This Training Manual describes a seven-step process for school/public library cooperation. Meetings among project planners, between planners and local school and public library administration, among local representatives and a three-day training/planning seminar facilitate this process.

Approximately three weeks is needed to carry out the process through the training seminar. The time involved in implementation, follow-up, and evaluation varies according to the plan proposed by the community team at the seminar.

At each step in the manual, an activities description and a responsibilities checklist lead users through the process. Materials in the Resource Supplement provide further assistance for selected steps (primarily Step 6: Training Seminar) and are lettered for cross-reference with the Training Manual.

The manual begins with project objectives and a flow-chart of the process for completing those objectives. In most sections of the supplement, one or more experiential activities are indicated and staff instructions are provided.

School/Public Library Cooperative Planning Project Objectives

As a result of the school/public library cooperative effort, local community teams are expected to:

- **Recognize and utilize resources of the team members, other community teams, and other resource systems.**
- **Know the value of, and be able to apply, problem solving techniques.**
- **Understand the dynamics of groups or organizations in a planning process.**
- **Increase awareness of available resource systems, services and materials, and accessing procedures.**
- **Clarify the role of library/media personnel in coordinating resource utilization.**
- **Become aware of successful dissemination practices/strategies.**
- **Develop a tentative plan for effective use of resources for their communities.**
- **Serve as a network (model) for sharing information and processes with other communities.**

Step 1

System Planning

Purpose: *To identify at the system-level potential for initiating the school/public library planning process.*

General Description of Activities

Sponsors of the school/public library cooperative project meet to discuss their common interests and clients' needs, their individual contributions of staff time and financial assistance, the target area(s) for participation, specific assignments, roles, and responsibilities in preparation for orientation meetings with the local school district and public library administration and for the training seminar.

A critical factor in this step is deciding on the number of districts to be trained in a library region. Planning personnel may wish to identify a pool of potential districts based on their own knowledge of the community or send a letter to all district superintendents and public librarians inviting their participation. Although criteria for participation may vary, key areas to consider are:

- the extent to which the local district librarians (media specialists) and the public librarians have demonstrated some willingness for a cooperative working relationship.
- an adequate amount of resources are available for resource sharing.
- the school district has initiated or is willing to initiate a needs assessment process, i.e., the Illinois Problems Index.
- the willingness of the school district administration and public library board to commmit staff resources for the improvement effort.

Key Responsibilities

System personnel should:

- Review the training manual and supplementary materials.
- Identify potential target groups and selection procedures.
- Develop budget and fiscal arrangements.
- Identify dates, site arrangements, trainers, format for training.
- Clarify individual roles and contributions.
- Develop evaluation design.
- Prepare resource materials, i.e., suggested reading lists, handouts.

Step 2

Identification of Target Areas

Purpose: *To identify local districts/public libraries for participation in a school/public library cooperative improvement effort.*

General Description of Activities

Regardless of how the participants are identified in Step 1, it is vital that the planners conduct a face to face meeting with the district superintendent. This meeting should cover the purpose of the program, goals, willingness to commit staff and material resources, and attitudes toward a school/public library collaborative effort. Another meeting is held to inform the public librarian and the public library board trustee of the proposed training program and to obtain their interest and commitment. These meetings may occur in individual communities or regionally.

Key Responsibilities

Systems personnel should:

- Explain project purpose to district superintendents, public librarians, and library boards.
- Discuss general problem areas as a focus for this process.
- Determine various resources to share among participating groups.
- Review the Training Manual.
- Consider budget and fiscal arrangements.
- Agree on dates, sites, trainers for training.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Identify expected process results.

Step 3

Identification of Local Team

Purpose: *To identify appropriate representatives from the school district and public library to participate in a team planning effort.*

General Description of Activities

An appropriate representation for the local planning team includes: public librarian, public library trustee, school librarian, classroom teacher, principal, and curriculum coordinator, if available. The district superintendent selects the education members and the public library board identifies its members.

Key Responsibilities

The school district superintendent should:

- Secure commitment from school board for proposed effort.
- Appoint librarian, classroom teacher, principal, (curriculum coordinator), or other staff to team.
- Outline tasks of proposed effort to team members.

Public Library Board should:

- Identify head librarian and trustee as team members.
- Outline tasks of proposed effort to team members.

Step 4

Orientation of Team Members

Purpose: To acquaint participants with their role and purpose in the cooperative effort.

General Description of Activities

An orientation session conducted for all members of the community team prior to the training seminar is essential to more fully acquaint them with the overall program, the expected outcomes, and implications of this planning process.

Background information (such as in Resource A of the Resource Supplement) secured from each team member helps seminar planners assess participants' interest in and commitment to school/public library cooperation. In addition, team members need instruction in gathering local information. A formal needs assessment survey or a small group brainstorming process are two techniques teams could use to collect data from their communities.

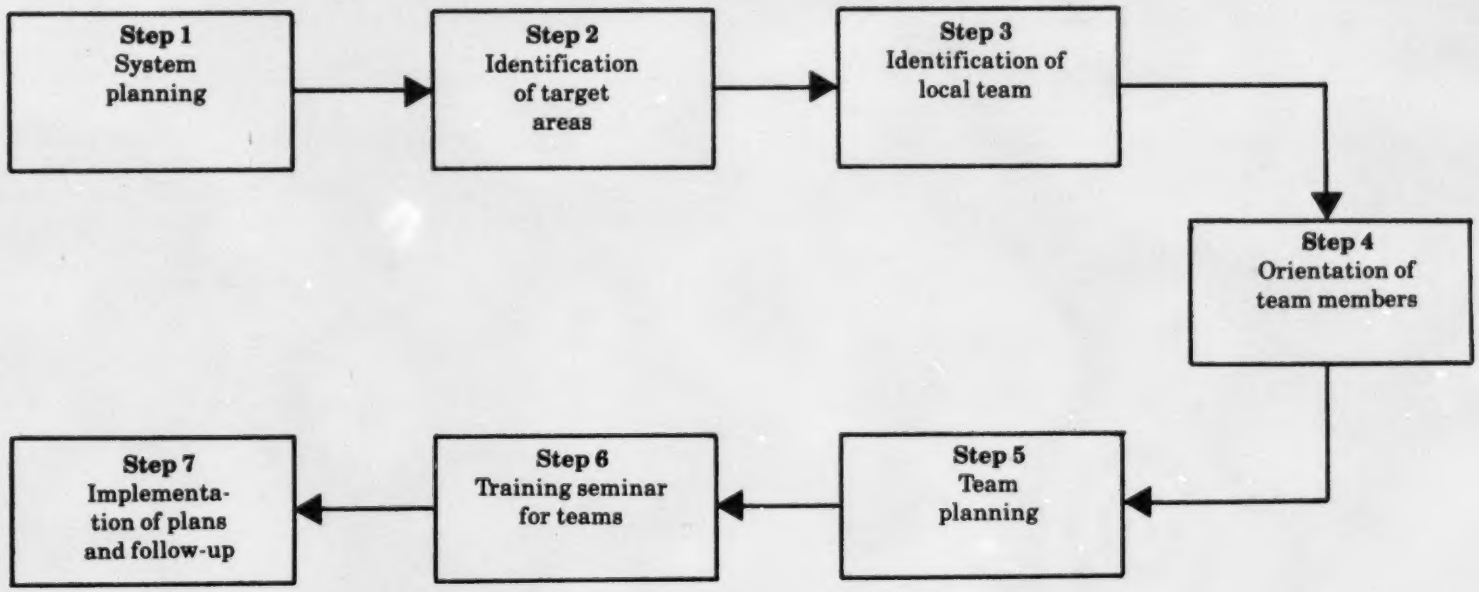
An explanation of the training dates, training site, and appropriate fiscal information is useful for the participants. They should also be informed of the purpose and necessity for conducting individual team planning meetings (in Step 5) prior to the training sessions.

Key Responsibilities

Planning personnel should:

- Schedule meetings with participants.
- Explain purpose and expected outcomes.
- Clarify expectations of participants.
- Secure participants' background information.
- Explain pre-training assignments.
- Demonstrate information-gathering techniques.

School/Public Library Planning Process



Step 5

Team Planning

Purpose: To share information and address local concerns in a pre-planning capacity.

General Description of Activities

A meeting held at the local level allows team members to react to the orientation meetings (Step 4), to get acquainted, learn about professional interests and concerns and how these overlap, and do some preliminary planning in preparation for the training seminar in Step 6. Local teams should discuss their community and their commitment to improving a learning resource aspect(s) of their community.

Key Responsibilities

The local team meets to:

- Appoint team leader and recorder.
- Review and discuss philosophy, function, services of each library.
- Review local problem areas for improvement through effective use of resources.
- Orient school/community groups about the program.
- Decide tentative areas of concern to be addressed through team planning.

Step 6

Training Seminar for Teams

Purpose: *To provide training/planning experience for team members to acquire or enhance knowledge/skills important for improvement efforts; develop a tentative action plan for a local improvement effort; increase awareness of resource systems and accessing procedures.*

General Description of Activities

The training seminar consists of three days of learning activities divided into three phases. A sample agenda for presenting this three-day seminar appears as Resource B of the Resource Supplement.

Phase 1: Training for Improvement Efforts

This phase includes units on communications, group dynamics, and change principles, which are skill areas participants need to function as a team and to implement change or improvement in their communities.

Communications

The *Communications* section provides team members with experiential learning activities in three areas of communication: 1) listening/summarizing/understanding, 2) one-way and two-way communication, 3) nonverbal communication. These areas are probably familiar to participants but need to be periodically reviewed for effective interaction with other people. Listening receives first emphasis because it is basic to all verbal communication. The sequence for the other activities is arbitrary.

Refer to Resources E, F, G, and H in Resource Supplement for related materials.

Group Dynamics

The *Group Dynamics* section stresses the importance of understanding human relationships. Participants work in group situations. Knowledge of group dynamics is important to team members to analyze how decisions are made, how support is gained, how human resources are used, and other group behaviors evidenced when groups contemplate change or attempt improvements.

Refer to Resource I in Resource Supplement for related materials.

Change Principles

The *Change Principles* section prepares participants for implementing change by emphasizing the adoption process (steps by which a system changes over to a new mode of operation), the impact of change on various individuals, and dealing with resistance to change. These areas are important to teams in working with other people, especially with those who may not agree with the proposed change.

Refer to Resource J in
Resource Supplement
for related materials.

Phase 2: Problem Solving/Planning Model

In this phase, teams use a five-step planning process to affect change. This phase gives team members practical experience with a proven model.

In the first of the five steps, *Philosophy,* team members realize the value of philosophy, regarding effective use of resources, and develop assumptions which will serve as a base for their planning. After reviewing other systems' philosophies, team members write their own.

The second step, *Needs Assessment,* acquaints team members with needs assessment procedures, such as surveying clients, reviewing data obtained, and interpreting data for clients. Team members use techniques such as brainstorming and Force Field Analysis to identify and prioritize their own needs.

During the third step, *Goal Generation and Planning Objectives,* the team develops one or more major goals, several objectives, and a timetable. Goals and objectives serve as the framework for generating activities in the fifth step of the model.

The fourth step, *Resource Identification,* increases team members' awareness of resources within their communities, as well as with other resource systems available to them (i.e., colleges, universities, community and business groups, media, Illinois State Board of Education, Regional Library Systems, and others.) It is important to note that this fourth step of the Problem Solving/Planning Model closely relates to the third phase of the training seminar, Resource Awareness, during which participants learn about resources applicable in this step.

For the fifth step, *Activities,* team members write specific activities for each objective outlined in step three (Goal Generation), determine who will implement the activities and when, what materials will be needed, what costs will be incurred, and how evaluation will occur.

Refer to Resource K in
Resource Supplement
for related materials.

Phase 3: Resource Awareness

The specific purpose of this phase is to link the resource provider (researcher) with the resource user (practitioner). Team members are introduced to various resource systems, such as CEMREL, ILLINET, ISBE/IRDN, and other major resource-providing systems in individual presentations.

Refer to Resource N in Resource Supplement for related materials.

Key Responsibilities

Seminar planners should:

- Inspect potential training sites to determine appropriate space for large group as well as small group sessions.
- Supply facility management with specific instructions/requirements and a copy of the seminar agenda.
- Recontact the facilities management a few days before the seminar date.
- Plan to arrive early on the date of the seminar to check on room arrangements, coffee service, registration, set-up, and to greet participants as they arrive.
- Prepare in advance name tags with large type.
- Have available chalk boards or easels with newsprint pads, tape, markers, and other supplies for each group.
- Provide coffee and tea to participants.
- Begin promptly as scheduled and end on time.
- Identify consultants as early as possible and provide them with:
  - an overview and agenda for the program with the desired outcomes,
  - direction about concepts to be covered in a presentation and suggested experiential activities,
  - background on the participants and communities.
- Employ individuals experienced in process skills to work with each team during the problem solving/planning process.
- Hold an inservice training/meeting for facilitators prior to the seminar to review the agenda, processes, and facilitator role.
- Assist in clarifying the role of facilitators by discussing the guidelines for group facilitators (in Resource Supplement, Resource D).
- Meet with consultants and facilitators at the end of each day of the seminar to discuss the day's activities and suggest strategies for the next day if necessary.

Step 7

Implementation of Plans and Follow-Up

Purpose: *To provide additional training and technical assistance as teams initiate proposed activities and make needed modifications.*

General Description of Activities

Follow-up is essential for optimal implementation of the tentative plans developed at the training seminar and for continued cooperative planning. After the training seminar, the teams have several activities to complete in their communities. Informing other staff and the community about the project can be accomplished through a news release, staff meetings, civic group meetings, or other techniques. The original team may need/want to add members from their staffs or the community who have interest or expertise in the improvement effort. As the team continues to work on the plan, make changes, or seek external resources, planning personnel provide additional assistance. Planning personnel should attend local team planning meetings and serve as consultants or resource brokers for needed external resources. Also, planning personnel can coordinate a networking structure with the local teams for sharing their experiences and accomplishments with other communities which may want to initiate a school/public library cooperative effort. It is important that the community teams remain as a planning unit and continue to work cooperatively.

Key Responsibilities

Local teams should:

- Orient school administration and public library board about plans.
- Inform faculty and community groups about plans.
- Expand team membership for implementing/adapting plan.
- Coordinate a process for identifying local priorities.
- Coordinate acquisition of needed resources.
- Modify plans as needed.
- Serve as resources to other communities.
- Establish regularly scheduled meetings for ongoing needs identification, planning, evaluation, and coordination.

Key Responsibilities (continued)

Planning personnel should:

- Assist with further analysis of local needs.
- Plan with teams.
- Establish systematic communication of information, achievement with teams.
- Conduct evaluation.

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